

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2017
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt and Tassie Lewis were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon, City Attorney James Brogdon, Chief Dwayne Tennie and Chief Trey Cooper.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order and Pastor Denley Caughman gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests and the press (Hometown TV 8).

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on September 12, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; the motion carried.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held on September 12, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; the motion carried.

Mr. Randy Brown, with the City of Marion Building Maintenance Department, was named the *September Employee of the Month*. Mayor Brady stated that Mr. Brown helps with a vast number of maintenance projects throughout the City, and always does things cheerfully.

Mayor Ashley Brady introduced the new Recreation Director Kimberly Elliott. He noted that she is doing a great job organizing the department.

Mayor Ashley Brady commented on the City's Victim's Advocate Agreement. He stated that the City is currently transitioning from its services with Trinity Behavioral Care to performing the services in house. Captain Cindy Barr and Almetta Mullins are currently in the process of training to become the Victim's Advocates for the City. Mayor Brady stated that the City will need to retain the services of Trinity Behavioral Care until Captain Barr and Ms. Mullins completes the training. ***Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to continue the current Victim's Advocate Agreement with Trinity Behavioral Care. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson.*** Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked if this is a monthly agreement. Mayor Brady confirmed that the agreement is monthly with a 30 day notice required to each party prior to termination. ***Hearing no further discussion; the motion carried.***

Mayor Brady explained the City's bid process. He stated that the City makes an effort to give priority to local vendors from either the city or the county. He stated that there is presently a 2% variance for local businesses on any bids received. He recommends that the City increase this amount to 5% to be in alignment with Marion County. Mayor Brady added that the increase would help local business owners who choose to live and work here. This change would require amending the current ordinance. ***Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to work with the City Attorney to amend Section 1-5030 of the Code of Ordinances. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Hunt; the motion carried.***

Mayor Brady stated that the City received a \$50,000 USDA Grant to help with the purchase of a new fire truck. The total amount needed to purchase the fire truck is \$400,000. He stated that bids were solicited to fire truck manufacturers and two bids were received. Mr. Ammons commented that one of the bids did not meet the bid specifications; therefore, it was not considered. He recommended that Council accept the

bid from Fire Line, Inc. for \$398,575, with the option of wheel covers for an additional \$825. This option would be within the \$400,000 budget. Mr. Ammons explained that \$50,000 would be covered by the USDA Grant, and the first payment on the \$350,000 would be due in FY19. He stated that there would be 300 days to bill once the contract is signed, and payments would begin one year after receiving the fire truck. The estimated payment is \$45,000 per year with 3% interest. Mr. Ammons stated that financing options will be discussed with Council once the purchase details are complete with the manufacturer. Mr. Ammons noted that it will take about one year to build the new fire truck. He stated that two fire trucks are needed, and the City will apply for another grant in the future to purchase a used fire truck for around \$100,000. Mr. Ammons stated that once the delivery date of the new truck approaches, the City can try to sell the current trucks that need to be replaced. Those funds could be applied to the \$350,000 needed for the new truck. ***Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the bid from Fire Line, Inc. for \$398,575 and accept the \$50,000 USDA Grant with the understanding that financing would have to be arranged to fund the additional \$350,000 to complete the purchase; and to add the option of wheel covers for \$875. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; the motion carried.***

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the required USDA Grant documents. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; the motion carried.

Mayor Brady explained that the police substation on Hwy 76 in front of the Tru Tech building has not been occupied for a number of years due to significant water damage from a busted water line. The building had to be gutted on the inside, so only the outer shell of the building remains intact. He stated that the building was donated to the City by the H.C. Graham Estate; however, the City does not own the land. The new owners of the property have questioned what the City plans to do with the building.

Mayor Brady recommended that bids be solicited to sell the building. Mr. Ammons stated that bids would be advertised in the local paper, and would state that the building would have to be moved in a certain amount of days. The bids will be presented to Council once received. ***Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to advertise bids for the sale of the building as discussed. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; the motion carried.***

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Ammons discussed the City's parking ordinance. He stated that there have been some complaints about parking on Main Street that were addressed by himself and Chief Dwayne Tennie. Mr. Ammons stated that the current ordinance needs to be amended to reflect street name changes over the years. He stated that the Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing for October 30th to discuss parking issues and hear concerns from the public. The Commission will submit recommendations to Council for approval. Mr. Ammons stated that a lot of the language in the ordinance needs to be updated. He commented that one of the main issues is parking for residents that live in upstairs apartments in the downtown business district. The ordinance provides for off street and municipal parking for these residents; however, there have been complaints of these residents parking in front of downtown businesses. There is also some concerns with the overnight parking downtown because it prevents the street sweeper from cleaning those areas, and causes trash cans to be missed during garbage pickup routes. Mr. Ammons stated that Chief Tennie and his staff have done a great job monitoring this issue and informing downtown businesses and residents of the City's parking ordinance.

Mr. Ammons stated that as a result of the officer involved accident a few months ago, he and Mayor Brady met with Chief Tennie to discuss installing GPS trackers on the police vehicles to detect location and speed. The trackers will be installed on two cars

initially for a 60-day trial period. If these devices provide good results, they will be installed on all the police cars.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney James Brogdon announced that he was recently appointed as Interim CEO of Santee Cooper. He stated that this will be a temporary position that is expected to last no longer than one year. Mr. Brogdon commented that it is his hopes that Council will allow him to take a leave of absence during this time. He offered to assist with a recommendation for legal counsel, hopefully at the current salary paid to retain his services. Mr. Brogdon commented that it has been a pleasure working for the City of Marion. Mayor Brady stated that he and Mr. Ammons are working to obtain some temporary legal counsel, and they will report any progress to Council.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Brady stated that Departmental Reports were included in the Council packets.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Mayor Ashley Brady provided an update on the newly established Public Works Department. He stated that Mr. Winkie Fore has been named the Interim Public Works Director for a trial period of three months. He stated that he and Mr. Ammons have met with Mr. Fore to discuss the expectations for this position, and Mr. Fore will be re-evaluated in three months to determine if he will become the Public Works Director. Mayor Brady noted that Mr. Fore has been with the City for many years and is very knowledgeable on what needs to be done.

Mayor Brady commented on the recent concerns of flooding on Marshall Street as the new subdivision is under construction on Bluff Street. He stated that he and Mr. Ammons met with the developer and they were assured that he would help to alleviate

some of the ponding issues behind the homes on Marshall Street. A copy of an email discussion between the Mayor and the developer was included in the Council packets.

Mayor Brady stated that SCDOT is currently repairing sidewalks throughout the City that were damaged due to Hurricane Matthew.

Mayor Brady commented that the Azalea Garden Club, along with city and county employees, completely reworked the flower beds in front of the Marion County Library. This group will also be working on other beautification projects in the City. He encouraged everyone to thank the Azalea Garden Club members for this great initiative.

Mayor Brady stated that Halloween will be observed on October 31st in the City of Marion from 6pm – 8pm.

Mayor Brady added to the earlier discussion regarding downtown parking. He stated that he has met with Chief Tennie about this issue, and the Chief has been very positive in following up with the concerns. Mayor Brady advised Chief Tennie to write parking tickets for any violations.

Mayor Brady announced that the City will have its Annual Employee Health Fair on October 24th at the new fire station. He encouraged all employees to get the wellness checks and flu shots.

Mayor Brady stated that November 10th is the application deadline for the SC Disaster Assistance program to help repair flood damages caused by Hurricane Matthew.

Mayor Brady stated that unfortunately a shooting took place last month in the Rosewood housing complex that resulted in a fatality. He stated that all individuals involved have been apprehended thanks to Chief Tennie and the police department. Mayor Brady stated that he reached out to the Housing Authority Director Ann Burroughs to discuss ways the City can help with these issues. Mrs. Burroughs organized a community cookout for the housing complex which included food and staff support from the police and fire departments, and Councilmembers. The police officers and fireman talked with the residents and encouraged them to reach out to them with any concerns they may have. The fire department also educated the children with the Fire Safety House.

Mayor Brady stated that it was a well- attended event, and Mrs. Burroughs is making plans to host another event at the Bluff Street housing complex. Mayor Brady stated that he will provide Council with the time and date of this event once it is confirmed by Mrs. Burroughs. He stated that the City is doing everything possible to help lower the crime rate in the entire community.

Councilman Michael Baker had no update.

Councilman Joseph Frazier requested a copy of the job description for the Public Works Director position. He also requested an update on the sale of Thomas Mobile Home Park. Mr. Ammons stated that he was advised that they are awaiting closing documents to complete the sale. Councilman Frazier stated that he received an invitation to the cookout at Rosewood housing complex a day before the event. He stated that he approached the Mayor regarding the timing of the invitation and was advised that the event was not for everyone. He questioned why Council was not involved in the planning of the event, and the language on the flyer that stated the public is invited. Mayor Brady explained that this event was an initiative by Mrs. Burroughs and the Housing Authority, and Council was invited to come out for support and to provide input for helping the residents. Mayor Brady stated that the public was welcomed to come and no one would have been turned away. Councilman Frazier commented on a discussion during last month's meeting in which he was asked to refrain from calling residents by name during discussions. He stated that he has the freedom of speech and can say what he chooses. Councilman Frazier asked if the City has any plans for celebrating Veterans Day. Mayor Brady stated that a meeting was held today to discuss plans for a Veterans Appreciation Program. An agenda is currently being drafted and details of the date and time will be provided as soon as it is determined.

Councilmembers Ronald Atkinson and Ralph Atkinson had no update.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis announced that a job fair will be held on October 11th at the Marion County Adult Education Center. The event is sponsored by the SCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. Applications will be accepted for heavy machine operators and CDL training.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt thanked the citizens of Marion for their support as the City deals with trying times. He stated that financial challenges, unemployment and lack of education contributes to higher crime rates in the community. Mayor Pro-tem Hunt stated that Council is moving in the right direction to address the concerns of the community. He questioned how anyone could speak negatively about the efforts of Mrs. Burroughs, City Council and the police and fire departments for reaching out to help make a difference in the community following a tragedy. He asked that everyone assist those who try to do positive work in the community instead of fighting against them. He asked that Council work together to move forward and stop focusing on petty issues.

Mr. Ammons announced that the Marion High School Homecoming Parade will be held on October 13th at 4:30pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further discussion, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; the motion carried.

Mayor Ashley Brady

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

Taped: October 10, 2017